

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD  
BOARD MEETING SESSION – LOS ANGELES REGIONAL WATER BOARD  
MAY 19, 2020**

**ITEM 7**

**SUBJECT**

CONSIDERATION OF A PROPOSED RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN FOR THE LOS ANGELES REGION TO UPDATE THE BACTERIA OBJECTIVES FOR FRESH, ESTUARINE, AND MARINE WATERS DESIGNATED FOR WATER CONTACT RECREATION, BASED ON THE STATEWIDE BACTERIA PROVISIONS.

**DISCUSSION**

On February 13, 2020 the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Los Angeles Water Board) adopted [Resolution No. R20-001](#). This amendment updates the numeric bacteria objectives for fresh, estuarine, and marine waters designated for water contact recreation (REC-1) in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region (Basin Plan), based on the Statewide Bacteria Provisions.

Background

The Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region (Basin Plan) is the Los Angeles Water Board's water quality control plan for the coastal watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. The Basin Plan contains (i) the region's water quality standards, which consist of beneficial uses, water quality objectives to protect those uses, and an antidegradation policy, (ii) programs of implementation and other actions necessary to achieve water quality standards, and (iii) non-regulatory descriptions of environmental and land use characteristics of the region, including water quality conditions and related issues.

The purpose of the proposed amendment is to amend the Basin Plan to update the numeric bacteria objectives for waterbodies designated for REC-1, based on the 2018 Statewide Bacteria Provisions, in order to reflect current applicable objectives for the benefit of the Board, the regulated community, and other stakeholders.

Update of the Bacteria Objectives for Fresh, Estuarine, and Marine Waters Designated for Water Contact Recreation in the Los Angeles Region's Basin Plan

The Basin Plan for the Los Angeles Region contains numeric bacteria water quality objectives for the protection of water contact recreation (REC-1), limited contact recreation (LREC-1), non-contact recreation (REC-2) and shellfish harvesting (SHELL) in the Los Angeles Region. Across the state, regional water quality control boards (Regional Water Boards) have adopted similar objectives, for their areas of jurisdiction, into their Basin Plans.

On August 7, 2018, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) adopted Statewide Bacteria Provisions containing updated numeric bacteria water quality objectives for water contact recreation (REC-1) in fresh, estuarine, and marine (ocean) waters. These objectives are based on the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) 2012 recommended Clean Water Act Section 304(a) criteria for bacteria to protect primary contact recreation in coastal and non-coastal waters. The statewide bacteria provisions also contain implementation approaches for applying the objectives, including ways to address natural sources of bacteria, as well as seasonal and flow conditions that may affect the water contact recreation beneficial use.

These Statewide Bacteria Provisions were developed to establish consistent water quality objectives for California's waters, and to provide Regional Water Boards with tools and direction in addressing specific issues related to applying the statewide numeric bacteria water quality objectives. The statewide bacteria provisions supersede all existing numeric bacteria objectives for REC-1 in the nine Regional Water Boards' Basin Plans. The provisions do not, however, supersede narrative water quality objectives. They were approved by the Office of Administrative Law on February 4, 2019 and by U.S. EPA on March 22, 2019 and are now in effect. Therefore, the numeric bacteria water quality objectives for water contact recreation (REC-1) in the Los Angeles Region's Basin Plan are no longer applicable.

The amendment to the Basin Plan for the Los Angeles Region updates the water quality objectives for bacteria, that are applied to fresh, estuarine and marine waters designated for water contact recreation (REC-1), by removing the current objectives and replacing them with those provided in the statewide provisions. This action is consistent with the intent of the statewide provisions and avoids any potential misperceptions as to which REC-1 numeric objectives for bacteria are applicable in the Los Angeles Region.

## **POLICY ISSUE**

Should the State Water Board approve the amendment to the Basin Plan to update the bacteria objectives for fresh, estuarine, and marine water designated for water contact recreation, as adopted by Los Angeles Water Board Resolution No. R20-001?

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

None, because this action is already encompassed within the Los Angeles Water Board's and State Water Board's budgets.

## **REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT**

Approval of Los Angeles Water Board Resolution No. R20-001 will amend and update the Los Angeles Water Board's Basin Plan.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

That the State Water Board:

1. Approve the Basin Plan amendments adopted under Los Angeles Water Board Resolution No. R20-001.
2. Authorize and direct the Executive Director or designee to submit the Basin Plan amendments adopted under Los Angeles Water Board Resolution No. R20-001 to the OAL for concurrence with their non-regulatory status.